not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) Reservation of an area for exploitation by public sector is done by the State Governments taking into consideration not only the likely pace of mineral development but also other relevant factors that have a bearing on the overall national interests.

(b) and (c) Mining industries has been seeking dereservation of all such areas. The Central Government has been taking decision on such proposals received from the State Governments on merits of each individual case.

Lease out of Gandhamardan Bauxite Deposit to BALCO

3925. SHRI BASANT KUMAR DAS: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to lease out the Gandhamardan Bauxite deposit of Orissa to BALCO; and

(b) if the answer to part (a) above be in affirmative, the reasons for which the present decision has been taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) Presently BALCO does not have any mining lease for Gandhamardan Bauxite deposits in Orissa. The lease granted earlier for the above area is no longer valid. However, BALCO applied for another mining lease in the Gandhamardan area in June 1990. There is no positive response from the State Government to Orissa to the above application which has also suffered deemed rejection.

(b) Does not arise.

Setting up of Aluminium plants in Orissa

3926. SHRI BASANT KUMAR DAS:
SHRI MANMOHAN MATHUR:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal from the Orissa Government to set up some aluminium/ alumina plants in Orissa;

(b) if so, the districts in which these plants are proposed to be set up and by which companies; and

(c) whether any proposal has been given by the Orissa Government to set up such plants in Kalahandi district, if so, whether any M.O.U. has been signed by any company?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) to (c) No formal proposal has been received by the Central Government from the Government of Orissa to set up any aluminium alumina plants in Orissa. The following 3 applicants have been granted Letter of Intent (LOI) for setting up 100% Export Oriented Alumina Unit in the State of Orissa after considering the recommendations of the Govt. of Orissa and other relevant sectors:

	Applicant	Capacity	Location
1.	M/s Larsen & Toubro	10 LTPA	District Kalahandi
2.	M/s Indian Aluminium Company Limited (INDAL)	10 LTPA	District Koraput
3.	M/s Karnataka Telecables Limited	5 LTPA	District Kalahandi

M/s INDAL has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Orissa Mining Corporation (OMC), a state Government Undertaking for

prospecting and exploiting Daphilimali bauxite deposits of Koraput/Kalahandi districts.

Empowering of State Governments to renew mining licence

3927. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to authorise the State Governments to renew mining licences of major minerals;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether it is a fact that there has been considerable hardship to the entrepreneurs in renewing the licences?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) State Governments are authorised under the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) act, 1957 to renew mining leases of all major minerals. However, for minerals listed in the First Schedule to the Act, the State Governments need to obtain prior approval of the Central Government.

(c) No, Sir.

Removal of Granite from minor minerals to major minerals

3928. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of
MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal under Government's consideration to remove granite from the minor minerals category and shift it to the major minerals and bring it under the control of the Central Government;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for such a proposal;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the State Ministers of Mines Conference have objected to this proposal; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) No decision to this effect has been taken.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, some States are not in favour of such a move.

Amendment in MMRD Act, 1957

3929. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Federation of Indian Mineral Industries and the Federation of Mining Association of Rajasthan have urged upon Government to expedite legislation pertaining to certain essential amendments in the MMRD Act, 1957 which have become long overdue;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to encourage foreign participation/ investments in exploration and exploitation of minerals both in captive and non-captive mines if so, how it is proposed to be done; and

(d) whether Government propose to bring forward the amending Bill before Parliament during the current session and if not, what is the present stage of progress in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) The Federation of Indian Mineral Industries and the Federation of Mining Association of Rajasthan have made suggestions for amendments to the Mines & Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 and have requested expeditious action. The amendments suggested are primarily intended to liberalise the existing